PUBLIC NOTICE

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WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS BUREAU APPROVES PERFORMANCE PLANS OF THE EIGHT WIRELESS PROVIDERS THAT ELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ALASKA PLAN

WC Docket No. 16-271

By this Public Notice, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (Bureau) approves the performance plans of eight wireless providers in remote Alaska that elected to receive frozen high cost support pursuant to the terms provided by the *Alaska Plan Order*.[1] The approved plans are included in Appendix A.

On August 23, 2016, the Commission adopted the *Alaska Plan Order* to provide an integrated plan for high cost support for both fixed and mobile voice and broadband service in remote areas of Alaska (Alaska Plan), building on a proposal submitted by the Alaska Telephone Association (ATA).[2] Given the unique climate and geographic conditions of Alaska, the Commission found that it was in the public interest to provide Alaskan carriers with the option of receiving fixed amounts of support over the next ten years to deploy and maintain their fixed and mobile networks. Consistent with the proposal submitted by ATA, the Commission provided that eligible wireless service providers that chose to participate in the Alaska Plan must submit a performance plan meeting requirements specified in the *Alaska Plan Order*.[3] The Commission delegated authority to the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau to review the plans, including any timely filed update, and to approve a performance plan by public notice if it found that the plan met the applicable requirements adopted in the *Alaska Plan Order* and will serve the public interest.[4]

[1] *Connect America Fund; Universal Service Reform–Mobility Fund; Connect America Fund–Alaska Plan*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 16-271, WT Docket No. 10-208, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 31 FCC Rcd 10139 (2016) (*Alaska Plan Order*).

[2] *Id.* ATA proposed a consensus plan designed to maintain, extend, and upgrade broadband service across all areas of Alaska served by rate-of-return carriers as well as their mobile affiliates. Letter from Christine O'Connor, Executive Director, Alaska Telephone Association, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, WC Docket No. 10-90, Attach. (filed Feb. 20, 2015). We note that, in this Public Notice, we address only the performance plans submitted by mobile carriers.

[3] *See Alaska Plan Order*, 31 FCC Rcd at 10166-67, para. 85.

[4] *See id.* The Commission required that such performance plans specify the population that would be covered after five and ten years into the plan, respectively, broken down for each type of available middle mile, and within each type of middle mile, for each level of data service offered (including the minimum download and upload speeds for

(continued….)

Eight competitive eligible telecommunications carriers (CETCs) providing mobile wireless service in remote Alaska submitted proposed performance plans prior to the adoption of the *Alaska Plan Order*, and following its adoption, have timely filed revised plans.[5] As required by the *Alaska Plan Order*, we treat the filing of such plans as an election by the respective carriers to participate in the Alaska Plan.[6] Based on these commitments, over 131,000 more consumers in remote Alaska will have access to mobile broadband service at the end of 10 years, including over 120,000 that will receive 4G LTE service. After review, we find that the revised plans meet the requirements of the *Alaska Plan Order* and will serve the public interest. The plans extend 4G LTE broadband service to remote areas of Alaska where possible and otherwise improve or retain critical service.[7] Accordingly, we approve each of the revised performance plans from these CETCs, and we direct the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) to obligate and disburse frozen support as provided under the *Alaska Plan Order*, starting January 1, 2017, to each of these CETCs, subject to the following condition set out in that Order: an officer of the company must submit a letter in WC Docket No. 16-271 by December 29, 2016, certifying that the carrier will comply with the public interest obligations adopted in the *Alaska Plan Order* and the deployment obligations set forth in the approved performance plan.[8]

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each level), and that each plan would commit to service meeting the deployment standard specified in the Order. *See Alaska Plan Order*, 31 FCC Rcd at 10166-67, para. 85.

[5] *See* Letter from Christine O'Conner, Counsel, ATA, to Marlene H. Dortch, WT Docket No. 16-271 (Dec. 14, 2016), App. (updating the ASTAC, Bristol Bay, OTZ Wireless, and TelAlaska performance plans); Letter from Julie A. Veach, Counsel, GCI, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, WT Docket No. 16-271 (Nov. 29, 2016), App. (updating the GCI performance plan); Letter from Christine O'Conner, Counsel, ATA, to Marlene H. Dortch, WT Docket No. 16-271 (Nov. 2, 2016), App. (updating the Copper Valley, Cordova, and Windy City performance plans); *see also Alaska Plan Order*, 31 FCC Rcd at 10166-67, 10171, paras. 85-86, 97.

[6] *See Alaska Plan Order*, 31 FCC Rcd at 10171, para. 97.

[7] In the *Alaska Plan Order*, the Commission stated that it expected participants would work to extend 4G LTE service to populations not currently receiving it, but authorized the Bureau in particular instances to approve the maintenance of lower levels of technology, or upgrades from 2G to 3G, due to limitations such as difficult terrain or lack of access to terrestrial backhaul, and balancing the goal of reasonably comparable service with the goals of ensuring that support is used efficiently and remains within the amounts budgeted to a participating competitive ETC. *See Alaska Plan Order*, 31 FCC Rcd at 10167, para. 86. With one exception, the approved plans provide for deployment of some level of mobile broadband service, and in most cases, 4G LTE service, in all areas with terrestrial backhaul. *See* Appendix A. Bristol Bay states that, although there is terrestrial backhaul in its service area, it is constrained from providing wireless broadband due in part to the cost of the available backhaul. We approve Bristol Bay's commitments in light of this consideration, contingent on its commitment that, if affordable middle mile becomes available, it will deliver mobile broadband at least 4 Mbps download/1 Mbps upload speeds by Year 5 and 10 Mbps download/1 Mbps upload speed by Year 10. *See* Appendix A. While ASTAC notes the availability of terrestrial backhaul in a small portion of its service area, it relies at this time predominantly on satellite backhaul, and we approve its commitment to deploy 3G technology throughout its service area on that basis. *See id.* We remind funding recipients that, under the *Alaska Plan Order*, all mobile carriers receiving funding under the Alaska plan that rely exclusively on performance-limiting satellite backhaul for any portion of their served population are required to report if any terrestrial backhaul or comparable satellite backhaul became commercially available in the previous calendar year, and, if they have not already committed to providing 4G LTE at 10/1 Mbps speeds to the population served by the new backhaul, to submit revised performance commitments factoring in the availability of the new backhaul option. *See Alaska Plan Order*, 31 FCC Rcd at 10172, para. 102.

[8] *See Alaska Plan Order*, 31 FCC Rcd at 10171, para. 97 (requiring carriers to meet this condition following plan approval before receiving funding from USAC).

Additional Information. For additional information on this proceeding, contact Matthew Warner of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Competition and Infrastructure Policy Division, Matthew.Warner@fcc.gov, (202) 418-2419, or Audra Hale-Maddox of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Auctions and Spectrum Access Division, Audra.Hale-Maddox@fcc.gov, (202) 418-0794.

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Appendix A: Approved Performance Commitments

1. Arctic Slope Telephone Association Cooperative (ASTAC)

ASTAC Wireless

	Note 1						Note 2				Note 2			
Middle Mile	Population 2010 Census	Spectrum Codes (477 Code)	Population Served 12/31/15	% Base Population Served 12/31/15	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Upload/ Download Speeds	5 Year Base Population Served	5 Year % Total Population Served	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Upload/ Download Speeds	10 Year Total Base Population Served	10 Year % Population Served	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Upload/ Download Speeds
Satellite*	6427	91	6427	100%	86	32/32 Kbps	6427	100%	81	768/256 Kbps	6427	100%	81	768/256 Kbps
Microwave/Fiber**	402	91	402	100%	86	32/32 Kbps	402	100%	81	3.0/1.0 Mbps	402	100%	81	3.0/1.0 Mbps
		94					402	100%	81	3.0/1.0 Mbps	402	100%	81	3.0/1.0 Mbps
		90									402	100%	81	3.0/1.0 Mbps
Fiber***		91												
		94												
		90												

Note 1: Population per 2010 Census in service area. Excludes population served by AT&T and/or Verizon at 4G LTE using their infrastructure. Excludes Prudhoe Bay, AK pops as 100% of reported "residents" are oilfield workers (shift)

Note 2: Microwave/Fiber middle mile markets assumes use of multiple spectrums to deliver services. Year one is 2017.

* Today, the limiting factor for broadband speed with HSPA+ technology in a satellite fed middle mile market is the cost of that transport, not the technology itself. If ASTAC's economics change in the future we will update our obligations.

** Today, the limiting factor for broadband speed with HSPA+ technology in a Microwave/Fiber fed middle mile market (Nuiqsut) is the cost of that transport, not the technology itself. Any future improvement in middle mile costs will potentially allow for improved economics supporting the transition to LTE.

*** Quintillion Subsea Fiber project is ongoing but those possible impacts are excluded from this forecast until it is in service.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program (PEP), Updated annually. http://www.census.gov/popest/. U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census of Population, P94-171 Redistricting Data File. Updated every 10 years. http://factfinder.census.gov

Codes: https://transition.fcc.gov/form477/477inst.pdf

2. Bristol Bay Cellular

Bristol Bay Cellular Partnership

	Note 1		Note 2							Note 4				Note 4
Middle Mile	Population **2010** Census	Spectrum Codes (477 Code)	Population Served 12/31/2015	% Base Population Served 12/31/15	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Download/ Upload Speeds	5 Year Base Population Served	5 Year % Total Population Served	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Download/ Upload Speeds	10 Year Base Population Served	10 Year % Population Served	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Download/ Upload Speeds
Satellite														
Microwave/Fiber	4530	91	4530	100%	86	N/A	4530	100%	83	N/A	4530	100%	83	N/A
Fiber														

Note 1: Population per 2010 Census in service area. Excludes population served by AT&T and/or Verizon at 4G LTE using their infrastructure.

Note 2: Percentage of population able to be served at benchmark speeds as of 12/31/2015.

Note 3: Year 1 is 2017

Note 4: Bristol Bay Cellular Partnership is building an LTE network but is constrained from offering mobile broadband due to middle mile cost and availability. If affordable middle mile becomes available, BBCP will be able to deliver at least 4Mbps/1Mbps speeds by Year 5 and 10Mbps/1Mbps by Year 10.

Corrected Year 5 and year 10 Technology of Transmission

Updated population info 12-13-16 from 2010 Census Data

3. Copper Valley Wireless

Copper Valley Wireless, LLC

	Note 1		Note 2											
Middle Mile	Population 2010 Census	Spectrum Codes (477 Code)	Population Served 12/31/15	% Base Population Served 12/31/15	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Upload/ Download Speeds	5 Year Base Population Served	5 Year % Total Population Served	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Upload/ Download Speeds	10 Year Total Base Population Served	10 Year % Population Served	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Upload/ Download Speeds
Satellite	NA													
Microwave	2,426	90	2,377	98%	83	10MB/3MB	2,377	98%	83	10MB/3MB	2,377	98%	83	10MB/3MB
Fiber	6,708	90	202	3%	85	1MB/.8MB								
			6,171	92%	83	10MB/3MB	6,373	95%	83	10MB/3MB	6,373	95%	83	10MB/3MB

Note 1: Population per 2010 Census in service area. Excludes population served by AT&T and/or Verizon at 4G LTE using their infrastructure.
Note 2: Percentage of population served at benchmark speeds as of 12/31/15.
Note 3: Year 1 is 2017

4. Cordova Wireless

Cordova Wireless

	Note 1		Note 2											
Middle Mile	Population 2010 Census	Spectrum Codes (477 Code)	Population Served 12/31/15	% Base Population Served 12/31/15	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Upload/ Download Speeds	5 Year Base Population Served	5 Year % Total Population Served	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Upload/ Download Speeds	10 Year Base Population Served	10 Year % Population Served	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Upload/ Download Speeds
Satellite														
Microwave														
Fiber	4,000	91	2,400	100%	86	Voice Only	2,400	100%	83	10/1	2,400	100%	83	25/5

Note 1: Population per 2010 Census in service area. Excludes population served by AT&T and/or Verizon at 4G LTE using their infrastructure.
Note 2: Percentage of population served at benchmark speeds as of 12/31/15.
Note 3: Year 1 is 2017

5. GCI

GCI Proposed Alaska Plan Performance Commitments - November 29, 2016

Middle Mile	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Population 2010 Census (Note 1)	Population Served 12/31/15	% Base Population Served 12/31/15 (Note 2)	5 Year Base Population Served (Note 3)	5 Year % Total Population Served	10 Year Total Base Population Served	10 Year % Population Served	Minimum Expected Download/ Upload Speeds at Edge	Spectrum Codes (477 Code)
Fiber	83 (LTE)	64,158	13,455	21%	32,079	50%	64,158	100%	10/1 Mbps	90, 91, 93, 94
	80, 81, 82 (3G)		43,882	68%	25,258	39%	-	0%	.2/.05 Mbps	90, 91, 93, 94
	85, 86 (Voice/2G)		6,821	11%	6,821	11%	-	0%	<.2 Mbps	90, 91, 93, 94
Fiber Total			64,158	100%	64,158	100%	64,158	100%		
Microwave	83 (LTE)	50,717	125	0%	125	0%	42,095	83%	2/.8 Mbps	90, 91, 93, 94
	80, 81, 82 (3G)		29,764	59%	41,970	83%	8,622	17%	.2/.05 Mbps	90, 91, 93, 94
	85, 86 (Voice/2G)		20,828	41%	8,622	17%	-	0%	<.2 Mbps	90, 91, 93, 94
Microwave Total			50,717	100%	50,717	100%	50,717	100%		
Satellite	83 (LTE)	24,482	-	0%	12,363	50%	12,363	50%	1/.256 Mbps	90, 91, 93, 94
	80, 81, 82 (3G)		-	0%	-	0%	-	0%	.2/.05 Mbps	90, 91, 93, 94
	85, 86 (Voice/2G)		24,482	100%	12,119	50%	12,119	50%	<.2 Mbps	90, 91, 93, 94
Satellite Total			24,482	100%	24,482	100%	24,482	100%		
Total	83 (LTE)		13,580	10%	44,567	32%	118,616	85%		
Total	80, 81, 82 (3G)		73,646	53%	67,228	48%	8,622	6%		
Total	85, 86 (Voice/2G)		52,131	37%	27,562	20%	12,119	9%		
Grand Total		**139,357**	139,357	100%	**139,357**	100%	**139,357**	100%		

Note 1: Population per 2010 Census in service area. Excludes population served by AT&T and/or Verizon at 4G LTE using their infrastructure.
Note 2: Percentage of population served at benchmark speeds as of 12/31/15.
Note 3: Year 1 is 2017.

6. OTZ Wireless

OTZ Wireless

Middle Mile	Base Population 2010 Census (Note 1)	Spectrum Codes (477 Code)	Base Population Served 12/31/15 (Note 2)	% Base Population Served 12/31/15 (Note 2)	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Download/ Upload Speeds	5 Year Base Population Served (Note 5)	5 Year % Total Population Served	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Download/ Upload Speeds	10 Year Total Base Population Served	10 Year % Population Served	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Download/ Upload Speeds
Satellite	7,523	91	4,712	62.6%	86	No Data available	0 (Note 4)							
		91					4,317	57.4%	83	2Mb/0.5Mb	4,317	57.4%	83	2Mb/0.5Mb
Microwave														
Fiber		91	0				3,206 (Note 6)	100%	83	4Mb/1Mb	3,206 (Note 6)	100%	83	4Mb/1Mb

Note 1: Population per 2010 Census in service area. Excludes population served by AT&T and/or Verizon at 4G LTE using their infrastructure.
Note 2: Population served at benchmark speeds as of 12/31/15. The difference between Base Population 2010 Census and Base Population Served as of 12/31/2015 is the unserved population as of that date.
Note 3: Year 1 is 2017.
Note 4: OTZ plans on sunsetting GSM voice-only service.
Note 5: Kotzebue will be the only location served with fiber backhaul, all other locations will be served with satellite backhaul.

7. TelAlaska Cellular

TelAlaska Cellular, Inc.

Middle Mile	Population 2010 Census (Note 1)	Spectrum Codes (477 Code)	Population Served 12/31/14 (Note 2)	% Base Population Served 12/31/14 (Note 2)	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Download/ Upload Speeds	5 Year Base Population Served	5 Year % Total Population Served	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Download/ Upload Speeds	10 Year Base Population Served	10 Year % Population Served	Technology Of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Download/ Upload Speeds
Satellite	15,198	91	11,702	77%	86	256 Kbps/ 256 Kbps	6,079	40%	86	256 Kbps/ 256 Kbps	3,040	20%	86	256 Kbps/ 256 Kbps
		91	2,888	19%	80	1.0 Mbps/ 128 Kbps	4,863	32%	80	1.0 Mbps/ 128 Kbps	6,231	41%	80	1.0 Mbps/ 128 Kbps
		91				1.0 Mbps/ 128 Kbps	3,800	25%	83	1.0 Mbps/ 128 Kbps	5,623	37%	83	1.0 Mbps/ 128 Kbps
Microwave														
Fiber														

Note 1: Population per 2010 Census in service area. Excludes population served by AT&T and/or Verizon at 4G LTE using their infrastructure.
Note 2: Percentage of population served at benchmark speeds as of 12/31/14.
Note 3: Year 1 is 2017

TelAlaska Cellular, Inc. (TCI) service area is 100% served by satellite middle mile. The physical limitations of satellite middle mile do not allow for latency below 100 milliseconds. In addition, cost factors do not allow for data allowance at or above 150,000 Mbps. Upload and download speeds are also limited due to the high cost of satellite bandwidth.

8. Windy City Cellular

Windy City Cellular

	Note 1		Note 2											
Middle Mile	Population 2010 Census	Spectrum Codes (477 Code)	Population Served 12/31/2015	% Base Population Served 12/31/2015	Technology of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Upload/ Download Speeds	5-Year Base Population Served	5-Year % Total Population Served	Technology of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Upload/ Download Speeds	10-Year Base Population Served	10-Year % Population Served	Technology of Transmission (477 Code)	Minimum Expected Upload/ Download Speeds
200kb	325	91	325	100%	86	200k/200k	325	100%	86	200k/200k	325	100%	86	200k/200k
500kb	325	91	325	100%	86	200k/200k	325	100%	86	200k/200k	325	100%	86	200k/200k
1,000kb	325	91	325	100%	86	200k/200k	325	100%	86	200k/200k	325	100%	86	200k/200k
Satellite	325	91	325	100%	86	200k/200k	325	100%	86	200k/200k	325	100%	86	200k/200k

Note 1: Population per 2010 Census in service area. Excludes population served by AT&T and/or Verizon at 4G LTE using their infrastructure.
Note 2: Percentage of population served at benchmark speeds as of 12/31/2015.
Note 3: Year 1 is 2017